



Truman VA BULLETIN

Take Note:

- There's still time to make changes to your Health Benefits. Open Season was extended to January 31.
- The inauguration of President-Elect Obama will be broadcast to VA facilities on VAKN Channel 2 beginning at 10:30 AM CST on Tuesday, January 20. You will be able to watch from your desktop PC.

Department of Veteran Affairs—Columbia, Missouri

Volume 2009, Issue 1

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE

VA joins the nation in observing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 80th birthday anniversary. The Federal holiday in Dr. King's honor will be Monday, Jan. 19. The national theme for the holiday is "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On...Not a Day Off!" Each year, on the third Monday of January, we reflect on the life and legacy of a man that brought hope and healing to America. The late Dr. King was born on Jan. 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Ga., and became the world's best-known advocate of the civil rights movement.

The King Holiday honors the timeless values he taught us through his example. The values of courage, truth, justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service in the face of opposition so elegantly defined Dr. King's character and empowered his leadership. He

was a man of faith that dreamed of a meritorious nation with nonviolence as a catalyst of change and he led a nationwide community movement that achieved historic reforms to help make this belief a reality. On this observance, we commemorate the universal, unconditional love, forgiveness and belief in nonviolence that imbued Dr. King's holistic message of peace.

In Dr. King's *I Have A Dream* speech, he said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." On Nov. 4, 2008, Dr. King's dream came true. For the first time in history, the American people elected an African American to be President. On Jan. 20, Barack Obama will be sworn in as

the 44th President of the United States.

On a daily basis, VA is in a position to carry on Dr. King's legacy – his commitment to helping others. Our veterans and their families are our top priority and the employees that serve them are the organization's most valued resource. Therefore, we must all ensure that equal opportunity is carried out in our service to veterans as well as through hiring, promotion and advancement of our diverse workforce.



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TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT INCREASE

Service-disabled and low-income veterans that are reimbursed for travel expenses while receiving care at VA facilities will see an increase in their payments beginning Jan. 9. A recently passed law allows VA to cut the amount it must withhold from the mileage reimbursement. The deductible amount will be \$3 for each one-way trip and \$6 for each round trip – with a cap per calendar-month of \$18, or six one-way trips or three round trips, whichever comes first. The previous deductible was \$7.77 for a one-way trip and \$15.54 for a round trip, with a calendar-month cap of \$46.62.

Service-disabled and low-income veterans are eligible to be reimbursed by VA for the travel costs of receiving health care or counseling at VA facilities. Veterans traveling for Compensation and Pension examinations also qualify for mileage reimbursement. VA can waive deductibles if they cause financial hardship. In November, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. James B. Peake announced VA's second increase in the mileage reimbursement rate during 2008, from 28.5 cents to 41.5 cents a mile.



2009 SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM OBSERVANCES

VA observes special days, weeks and months in order to promote inclusion of all employees and to serve as equal employment opportunity training. The 2009 calendar of observances is as follows:

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday – Jan. 19
- Black History Month – February
- Women's History Month – March
- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month – May
- Women's Equality Day – Aug. 26
- Hispanic Heritage Month – Sept. 15 to Oct. 15
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week – September.
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month – October
- Native American Indian Heritage Month – November.



DOUGLASS STUDENT PROVIDES ARTISTIC SUPPORT

Brandon Gleason, a Frederick Douglass High School student in Truman VA's long-time Partner in Education program, recently painted patriotic pictures on the collection box for the "Cell Phones for Soldiers" project. The finished product is back in its regular location by the Ambulatory Care Addition passenger elevators on the

first floor. Brandon, who works in sterile processing, is in his second year of the program at Truman VA. Thank you, Brandon!



O. I. & T. CORNER

OI&T has completed the deployment of the Lynx Duress (Code Orange) software to all personal computers except those in treatment rooms. This includes installation of the LynxKey, a keyboard shortcut, and LynxMessenger, a pop-up messaging service. An issue with the CTRL + F1 keys, which caused numerous false Code Orange initiations, has been corrected. However, staff members are reminded to not place any items on the keyboard or test the button as this will initiate a Code Orange. When the software has been installed, users will find a green K and M in their system tray

on the right hand side of their start bar. If those letters are red, please reboot your computer. If that does not change the K/M letters to green, please enter a TrackIT Work Order with "Lynx" set in the Work Order Type. We anticipate starting the Lynx messaging function in the near future. Finally, you are reminded to not shut down your personal computer at the end of your work day.

Please just log off. PCs should remain on at all times.



LEAVE IT ON!



JANUARY SERVICE PIN RECIPIENTS

35-Years

Rebecca A. Rahmoeller, RN, Nurse Manager (PC)

25-Years

George E. King, Jr., RN, Staff Nurse (PS)

20-Years

Debra J. Cahow, Patient Representative (PI)

Cheryl B. Gilleland, Medical Records Technician (HAS)

Jacquelyn L. Janssen, Inventory Management Specialist (Logistics)

Mike R. Womack, Lead Medical Supply Technician (PS)

15-Years

Debbie L. Arbeitman, OD, Optometrist (SC)

Allene D. Norman, Medical Technologist (CS)

10-Years

Faith A. Andrulot, LPN (PS)

William J. Greising, RN, Staff Nurse (PS)

Heather L. Milliner, Purchasing Agent (CS)

Dianne M. Mirtz, Program Support Assistant (PC)

5-Years

Debbie A. Keisker, LCSW, Social Worker (PS)

Brandi M. Reuter, Pharmacy Technician (Pharmacy)

Tonya L. Wise, Dental Assistant (SC)





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Nurse Manager, Neva Berkey, RN retires after 35 years of service.

WELCOME

Lucy Armstrong, Nursing Assistant (PS)
Shelia Berry, Nursing Assistant (PS)
Pedro DeLeon, IT Specialist (OI&T)
Jessica Holdinghaus, Social Work Student (PS)
Heather Horne, Social Work Student (PS)
Daniel Ludwig, RN, Staff Nurse (PS)
Marco Pantoja, Secretary (FM)
Cynthia Wesselmann, RN, Staff Nurse (PS)

FAREWELL

Neva Berkey, RN, Nurse Manager (PS)
Jessica Christen, Student Nurse Technician (PS)
Rebecca Coffin, LPN (PS)
Kevin Henderson, Telephone Operator (HAS)
Chelsea Petree, Student Nurse Technician (PS)
Emily Smith, Student Nurse Technician (PS)
Emily Viers, Student Nurse Technician (PS)
Dwain Watrous, MD Staff Anesthesiologist (SC)
Bezawit Yirgalem, RN, Staff Nurse (PS)

Odds and Ends

VA STAFF INFLUENZA VACCINATION WEEK

Jan. 12-18 has been designated as VA Staff Influenza Vaccination Week. If you have not gotten your annual flu shot, this is another opportunity. All VA employees, trainees and volunteers are encouraged to get annual flu shots. Also, if you received your flu shot elsewhere, please let Employee Health know.

UPDATED FACT SHEETS ON VETERAN BENEFITS

For several years, there has been a veterans benefits "learning map" display on the first floor opposite the Nurse Recruiter's office. The fact sheets associated with those benefits have been updated in recent months. This useful resource can be shared with all veterans as well as interested employees, volunteers and visitors.

THANK YOU

I came back to work from maternity leave a few weeks ago and I want to thank all those that generously donated their annual leave. I cannot tell you how much it was appreciated. Thank you!

Katie Carlyle